

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1           1.    A method of presenting a user with selection of  
2 items, wherein each item is characterized as being a member of  
3 one category selected from a plurality of categories, the  
4 method comprising the steps of:

5               determining a number of categories which are to be  
6 represented in a display;

7               determining a number of selections which can be  
8 presented at one time in the display, a selection being either  
9 an item or a category;

10              displaying at least one item label and at least one  
11 category label, where the category label represents the items  
12 in the category, where the items and categories displayed are  
13 determined as a function of the number of categories, the  
14 number of selections and a threshold count, wherein items from  
15 categories with no more than the threshold count are  
16 represented by individual item labels and items from  
17 categories with more than the threshold count are collectively  
18 represented by one of the at least one category labels.

1           2.    The method of claim 1, further comprising the  
2 step of accepting user input selection of either an item label  
3 or a category label.

1           3.    The method of claim 2, further comprising the  
2 step of generating a regenerated display following the  
3 selection of a label, wherein the regenerated display is a  
4 display filtered according to the selected label.

1           4.    The method of claim 1, further comprising a  
2 step of setting the threshold count to a value which is  
3 calculated to fill the display with labels.

1           5.    A method of presenting a user with selection of  
2 items, wherein each item is characterized as being a member of  
3 one category selected from a plurality of categories, the  
4 method comprising the steps of:

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5           determining a number of categories which are to be
6 represented in a display;
7           determining a display area;
8           determining how much of the display area would be
9 left over area, if any, after display of category labels
10 representing items;
11          designating at least one category as an open
12 category, based on the number of items in the category;
13          displaying an item label for each item in the at
14 least one open category and other open categories, if any, and
15 a category label for each unopen category.

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1           6.     The method of claim 5, wherein the step of  
2     designating at least one category as an open category is a  
3     step of designating categories as open from the smallest  
4     category to the largest category until a category is reached  
5     which will result in a display of item labels and category  
6     labels which will fill but not exceed a display area.

1           7.     The method of claim 5, further comprising steps  
2     of:

3           when a cursor is over a category label, displaying  
4   summary information about the items in the category associated  
5   with the category label; and

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6         when the cursor is over an item label, displaying
7         detailed information about the item associated with the item
8         label.
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